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ABSTRACT

This research study surveyed the use of pass/no credit grading in student teaching. The measurement devices used were questionnaires developed to poll the opinions of the following groups: university personnel, coordinators of student teaching, noncenter hiring officials, student teachers, center cooperating teachers, and center administrators. Questions asked centered on approval or disapproval of pass/no credit grading in student teaching, opinions of the system's strengths and weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement. The composite summary of all data received indicates approval of the pass/no credit system from all personnel involved in the student teaching program. (Copies of each questionnaire are included as appendixes. Results of each questionnaire are included in the text.) (JA)

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
College of Education
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Department of Teaching

Office of Student Field Experience

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Pass/No Credit Survey

I. INTRODUCTION

The University of Northern Iowa moved from a letter grade in Student Teaching to a pass/no credit system on a trial basis in the late spring of 1970. One of the conditions mandated for approval was that an assessment be made of the effectiveness of the system after a period of three years. The Pass/No Credit Survey Committee was charged with this responsibility.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The availability of research specifically related to pass/no credit (or pass/fail) in student teaching is quite limited. However, two studies directly concerned with pass/no credit evaluation in student teaching have been identified and deserve our attention.

In the Massachusetts study, Armstrong and Mooney[1] utilizing a questionnaire technique, reported that in a random sample of 93 state colleges and universities more institutions were currently using a conventional system of evaluation. However, the study further indicates that those institutions currently using a conventional system were much more dissatisfied with their present system and desired a change to a non-conventional system. Further, those institutions currently using a non-conventional system would rather keep that system rather than change back to the conventional method of evaluation.

The attitudes of student teachers, college faculty, cooperating school supervisors and cooperating school administrators were much more favorable

1. Robert J. Armstrong and Robert Mooney. "A Comparison of the Types of Evaluation Systems Used in Student Teaching." Unpublished study, Center for Education Research, State College at Salem (Massachusetts), 1970.

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toward a non-conventional system. Student teachers evaluated under a non-conventional system have not had any difficulty obtaining their first teaching position.

In the second study, Meskel[2] developed an instrument to assess the attitudes of superintendents of schools in Iowa and Placement Directors and Directors of Student Teaching at 29 Iowa teacher education institutions. He found that Iowa employing superintendents prefer the pass/fail system with a written evaluation of the student teaching experience to the present letter grade and recommendation system by approximately 2 to 1.

Meskel also reported that by the fall of 1972, over one-half of all teacher education institutions in the state expected to be on a pass/fail system in student teaching.

III. PROCEDURE

Distinct questionnaires were developed to poll the opinions of representative groups concerned with evaluation in student teaching (See Appendices I - VI). The questions posed were intended to be open-ended in an attempt to obtain more meaningful feedback. Each of the following groups were polled:

I. University Personnel and Coordinators of Student Teaching
II. Non-Center Hiring Officials
III. Student Teachers
IV. Center Cooperating Teachers
V. Center Administrators

The design of the first three questionnaires (See Appendices I - III) provided for the collection of statistical data. Analysis of the comments permitted a categorization of responses for study. No attempt was made to categorize the comments on Questionnaires IV and V (See Appendices IV and V). Only representative comments are noted in this portion of the report.

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2. Thomas J. Meskel. "An Analysis of Iowa Superintendents' Opinions Concerning Marking Systems for the Student Teaching Experience" Research Paper. College of Education, University of Iowa, Iowa City (Iowa), 1970.

IV. RESULTS

Coordinator Questionnaire Responses N=17

1. Would you like to see UNI continue the use of the pass/no credit grading system in student teaching? Why?

Yes	No	Not necessarily
12 (71%)	3 (18%)	2 (12%)

2. What do you consider the major strengths of the pass/no credit evaluation system in student teaching?

Combined categorized responses to questions 1 and 2

		No. of responses
2.1	Reduced pressure on student teacher for a grade	10
2.2	Reduced pressure of supervisors and coordinators to determine a grade	9
2.3	Encourages individual development--learning how to teach, lets student teacher concentrate on teaching, trying different methods, gives student teacher direction, serves as a motivator.	8
2.4	Written evaluations are more objective and meaningful, provides more comprehensive and specific evaluation, fairer, forces hiring officials to evaluate strengths and weaknesses, more effective..	4
2.5	Promotes relaxed atmosphere--better relationship with supervisor, reduces tension, put student teacher at ease	3
2.6	It allows the evaluator to hide behind a nebulous, not easily understood system.	1
		n=35

3. What do you consider the major weaknesses of the pass/no credit evaluation system in student teaching?

Combined categorized responses to questions 1 and 3

		No. of responses
3.1	Reduces student teacher effort, motivation, student teachers "cop out".	6
3.2	Penalize grade conscious student teacher.	3
3.3	Tendency of hiring officials to equate check points with letter grades	3
3.4	Does not discriminate--no differentiation between high and low student teachers	2
3.5	Allows weak student teacher certification	2
3.6	Lack of guidelines--standardized grading practice..	2
3.7	Puts pressure on supervising teacher--grades tend to be higher	1
		n=19

4. What recommendations would you suggest for improving the evaluation system?

		No. of responses
4.1	Provide guidelines, explanations to supervisors and student teachers.	7
4.2	Reduce the number of check point columns	4
4.3	Reduce the number of items in each category.	1
4.4	Develop performance criteria	1
4.5	Use form 5A at midterm	1
4.6	Provide more space for written evaluation.	1
4.7	Credit but no certification for "D" student teachers	1
4.8	Eliminate the check list	1
		n=17

Coordinator Questionnaire Summary

Seventeen of the University Coordinators responded to the questionnaire. Twelve (71%) coordinators indicated that they were in favor of the continued use of the pass/no credit grading system in student teaching. The reduced pressure on the student teacher for a grade and the reduced pressure on supervisors and coordinators to determine a grade were considered the major strengths of the evaluation system. Coordinators felt that the major weakness of the evaluation system was that it reduced student teacher effort. The most prominent suggestion for improving the system was that guidelines and explanations should be provided to supervisors and to student teachers.

University Personnel Questionnaire Responses N=10

Breakdown by Position

Department Heads 9
Placement Director 1

1. Would you like UNI to continue the use of the pass/no credit grading system in student teaching? Why?

Yes	No	No Preference
9 (90%)	0	1 (10%)

Categorized responses to question #1

		No. of responses
1.1	Difficulty in assigning letter grades.	2
1.2	Written recommendations are more meaningful.	2
1.3	Encourages student teacher development	1

		No. of responses
1.4	Trend toward pass/no credit in universities.	1
1.5	Promotes consistency in evaluation between centers.	1
1.6	Students show their true selves in a non-threatening situation.	1
		n=8

2. What do you consider the major strengths of the pass/no credit evaluation system in student teaching?

Categorized responses to question #2

		No. of responses
2.1	Reduces pressure on student teacher for a grade.	4
2.2	Counteracts variation in grading between centers . . .	3
2.3	Takes pressure off of the evaluators	2
2.4	Encourages student teacher development	1
2.5	Meaningful written recommendations	1
2.6	Forces employer to look carefully at written recommendations.	1
2.7	Reduces stigma associated with failure	1
2.8	None	2
		n=15

3. What do you consider the major weaknesses of the pass/no credit evaluation system in student teaching?

Categorized responses to question #3

		No. of responses
3.1	No differentiation between low and high student teacher.	3
3.2	Reduced student teacher effort	2
3.3	Reluctance to fail student teachers.	1
3.4	Penalizes grade conscious student teacher.	1
3.5	No feedback on performance of student teacher to department	1
3.6	Written recommendations eliminate some student teachers from job market	1
3.7	None	1
		n=10

4. What recommendations would you suggest for improving the evaluation system?

		No. of responses
4.1	No credit for "D" work.	1
4.2	Specific suggestions at M.T. for improvement.	1
4.3	Move to competency based evaluation	1
4.4	Improve training of supervisors	1
4.5	Send copy of student teacher record to advisors . . .	1
4.6	Criteria for evaluation should be standardized and explained to student teacher.	1
4.7	More self-evaluation on a regular basis	1
		n=7

University Personnel Questionnaire Summary

The Department Heads and Placement Director strongly supported (90%) the continued use of the pass/no credit grading system in student teaching. Reduces pressure on student teacher for a grade (Item 2.1), promotes consistency in evaluation between centers (Item 1.5 and Item 2.2), and difficulty in assigning letter grades (Item 1.1 and Item 2.3) were listed as the major strengths of the pass/no credit evaluation system. This group felt that the major weaknesses of the evaluation system were that it did not differentiate between the low and high student teacher and that it reduced student teacher effort.

Non-Center Hiring Officials Responses N=21

Breakdown by Position	No. of responses
Superintendent	15
Assistant Superintendent	2
Principal	3
Director of Personnel	1

1. Would you like UNI to continue the use of its pass/no credit grading system in student teaching? Why?

	Yes	No	No Preference	No Opinion	Unfamiliar
	10	5	1	3	2
%	53	26	5	16	*NR

* Calculations of percentages do not include number in "Unfamiliar" column since these respondents indicated they were not acquainted with the system.

Categorized Responses to question #1

"Yes" Response	No. of responses
1.1 Grades are overemphasized, unimportant.	8
1.2 Relieves pressure on supervising teachers and student teachers.	1
1.3 Time is too short to assign a grade. . .	1
1.4 Makes screening easier	1
	n=11

"No" Response	No. of responses
1.5 A single indicator is needed for comparison	5
	n=5

2. Does the pass/no credit system (coupled with checklist and written recommendations) provide you with the kind of information you need in the screening process of potential candidates?

	Yes	Questionable	Not as Good	Partially	Unfamiliar
	17	1	1	1	1
%	85	5	5	5	*NR

3. Does absence of letter grades in our present pass/no credit evaluation system affect the employment opportunities of our teacher candidates?

	Yes	No	Unfair to Exceptional Student	Unfamiliar
	4	15	1	1
%	20	75	5	*NR

4. What are the major strengths of the pass/no credit system in student teaching?

Categorized response to question #4

		No. of responses
4.1	Reduces pressure on student teacher.	4
4.2	Places emphasis on learning to teach--allows student teacher the opportunity to try his ideas.	4
4.3	Comprehensive and specific concerning strengths and weaknesses	3
4.4	Reduces conflict between student teacher and supervisor	2
4.5	Reduces pressure for supervision by coordinator.	1
4.6	Counteracts discrepancies between individuals in grading	1
		n=15

5. What are the major weaknesses of the pass/no credit system in student teaching?

Categorized responses to question #5

		No. of responses
5.1	Does not discriminate, quality indicators needed.	6
5.2	May reduce student teacher effort, motivation . .	3
5.3	Sets minimal goals.	2
5.4	Allows weak student teacher to get through. . . .	1
		n=12

Non-Center Hiring Officials Summary

The response from non-center hiring officials was only marginally supportive for the present system. Ten respondents (53%) indicated that they were in favor of the continuance of the system, five (26%) were opposed to, three (16%) had no opinion and one (5%) showed no preference.

Officials supporting the evaluation program contended that grades were overemphasized and unimportant. Individuals opposed to the system felt that a single quality indicator was needed for comparison. However, 85% of the respondents indicated that the pass/no credit system (coupled with the check list) did provide the kind of information they needed in the screening process of potential candidates.

Student Teacher Questionnaire Responses N=33

1. Would you like UNI to continue the use of pass/no credit grading system in student teaching? Why?

Yes	No	No Preference
31 (94%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)

In several instances respondents provided more than one reason.

Categorized responses to question #1

		No. of responses	%
1.1	Reduces pressure on student teacher for a grade.	22	43
1.2	Encourages development--learning how to teach.	8	16
1.3	Promotes relaxed atmosphere--better relationship with supervisor, reduces clashes	8	16
1.4	Written evaluations more objective and meaningful.	6	12
1.5	More effective than a grade.	5	10
1.6	Forces hiring officials to look at strengths and weaknesses	2	4
		n=51	

2. What effect did the pass/no credit system have on you during student teaching?

Categorized responses to question #2

		No. of responses	%
2.1	Reduces tension, put me at ease, more relaxed.	8	33
2.2	Provided more comprehensive and specific evaluation	5	21
2.3	Let me be more flexible, try different methods	4	17
2.4	Let me concentrate on teaching rather than a grade	3	13
2.5	Gave me direction.	1	4
2.6	Served as a motivator.	1	4
2.7	Fairer	1	4
2.8	None	1	4
		n=24	

2A. Combined responses to questions 1 and 2

		No. of responses	%
2A.1	Reduced pressure for a grade.	22	30
2A.2	Encouraged development--learning how to teach; let student teacher concentrate on teaching, try different methods, gave me direction, served as motivator	17	23
2A.3	Written evaluations more objective and meaningful; provided more comprehensive and specific evaluation; fairer; forced hiring officials to evaluate strengths and weaknesses; more effective.	19	26
2A.4	Promoted relaxed atmosphere--better relationship; reduced tension, put me at ease	16	22
		n=74	

3. What recommendations would you suggest for improving the evaluation system?

Categorized responses to question #3

		No. of responses
3.1	Place full responsibility for evaluation with supervisors.	3
3.2	Strive for consistent philosophies of evaluation by supervisors and coordinators in all centers	2
3.3	Reduce 5 point checklist to 3 points	2
3.4	Include more 2 and 3 way conferences	2
3.5	Develop different evaluation forms for different level and subject areas.	1
3.6	Utilize 3-way decision-making on final evaluation. . .	1
3.7	Use form 5A earlier in evaluation.	1
3.8	Review and revise in each category	1
3.9	Reduce number of items in each category.	1
3.10	Expand written recommendation.	1
3.11	Eliminate checklist.	1
3.12	Provide on form 5A the opportunity to evaluate supervisors and to self-evaluate	1
3.13	Include other teachers of system in evaluation . . .	1
		n=18

4. Additional reactions toward pass/no credit system in student teaching.

Only three responses were non-repetitive. These were added to the appropriate categories in question #1.

5. For Graduates Only:
Did the absence of letter grades in our present evaluation system in student teaching affect your employment opportunities in any way? How?

No	%	Yes	Undecided	%
29	97	0	1	3

Nine graduates indicated that the written evaluations provided more useful and effective information for the employer.

Student Teacher Questionnaire Summary

A substantial majority (94%) of former student teachers were in favor of the continued use of the pass/no credit grading system. Students felt that the present system reduced the pressure for a grade, encouraged development, provided more meaningful evaluation, and promoted a more relaxed atmosphere. Twenty-nine out of thirty (97%) graduates felt that the absence of letter grades had no adverse effects on their employment opportunities.

Cooperating Teacher Questionnaire Responses

The following presentation represents the results of the analyzed data received from the 89 questionnaires returned. The questionnaire results recorded were received from cooperating teachers in our present University of Northern Iowa student teaching centers. The same centers are represented in this section as those listed under the report pertaining to responses by center administrators.

The reasons for responses and additional comments quoted represent a sample of those received. Some are direct quotes from the questionnaires while others are paraphrased examples representing similar comments found in answers to the same questions.

Question #1. Would you like to see UNI continue the use of the pass/no credit system?

Yes	No Opinion	No
63 (71%)	8 (9%)	18 (20%)

Reasons given for a no response:

1. Grades are helpful in providing people incentive for success.
2. Superior student teachers should be able to help their grade point by getting graded credit for student teaching.
3. Grades might increase the pressure on student teachers, but they are needed to keep the student teacher challenged.
4. I'm inclined to believe the pass/fail system is more responsible for what many of us have noted as a decreasing lack of effort on the part of recent student teachers.

5. At present, all students who pass get the same grade on their transcript. When the evaluator's form is removed after one year both the mediocre teacher and outstanding teacher have the same grade on their transcript.

6. The present pass/no credit system works against the above average to excellent student teacher.

7. Student teachers feel they have to do a pretty poor job before they actually fail.

Question #2. Has the pass/no credit system made evaluation easier or harder when working with UNI student teachers?

Easier	No Difference	Harder
54 (61%)	21 (24%)	14 (16%)

Question #2A. In what ways? (Harder or easier)

1. Checklist easier than giving a grade.

2. It varies with student teachers. Some just fit into the pass group while others you would like to give an "A" too, etc.

3. The threat of grading "shading" made it difficult to achieve a good working relationship.

4. The time spent in writing a just and fair evaluation is the same.

5. You can evaluate the whole pattern and give a better picture than when it must fit into one or two letter grades.

6. It's easier, then attention goes directly to the student teacher behavior rather than the letter grade.

7. Grade competition is not as severe.

8. Students are more open-minded on strengths and weaknesses, not so interested in final letter grades.

9. It has made it more difficult to work with student teachers. Increasingly, we note an attitude of "what does it take to get by" rather than striving to achieve an A or B.

10. Much harder since more emphasis is placed on the evaluation.

11. Really makes no difference time, etc. about the same.

12. Easier since we now are able to evaluate on the basis of diagnostic and suggestive means rather than the grade as the almighty tool.

13. Because of the lack of pressure on the student teacher he performs better and is easier to evaluate.

14. About the same with a bit more care in compiling the written report.

15. I feel comfortable evaluating student teachers in a written evaluation on their strengths and weaknesses but do not feel good about trying to force this evaluation into a letter grade.

16. I find the form is easier to follow since no distinct lines between an A or B have to be made.

17. More work on my part, but I make a better evaluation.

18. It has been an easier method for the cooperating teacher, and it allows for a continued pleasant relationship with the student teacher.

Question #3. Is the evaluation checklist found on the UNI final form consistant with a pass/no credit system?

Yes	No Opinion	No
74 (83%)	4 (4%)	11 (12%)

Question #4. Additional reactions toward pass/no credit system:

1. The checklist form of evaluation should be made more specific.

2. When my student teachers discuss their evaluations, invariably they want to know how they compare with other student teachers, a grade would tell them.

3. A letter grade means much more to the student teacher.

4. Checklist needs to be simplified.

5. A student should receive more than just a "pass" grade for the effort put in.

6. The present rating form is construed by many to be analogous to A, B, C, etc.

7. With the pass/no credit system the student teacher feels more comfortable in trying creative teaching.

8. It appears as if now we are giving "withdrawals" and no one really receives a "no credit" grade.

9. If the student is still in student teaching by the 3rd or 4th week he feels assured of "passing". For some this takes the pressure off and they improve other than start loafing.

10. If a student really wants to become a teacher they will work hard regardless of the grading system.

11. I feel it has created a more relaxed teaching experience for the students.

12. If all coordinators and supervisors could agree on what an A, B, C, etc. is then the grading system is better than pass/no credit.

13. Grades still create more of a challenge than the pass/no credit.

14. Not having to worry about justifying an A or B, etc. allowed me time to concentrate on the areas of weakness.

15. This is the way a person in business is graded, either produce or we will find someone who can. You can't be just average anymore.

16. All activities are better with the pass/no credit system.

17. Maybe students should have the option of taking grades or pass/no credit.

18. Pass/no credit is more professional in spirit.

19. Form is ambiguous in that several areas are under each category, so sheet is difficult to use.

20. A three point scale might be of more value, now it parallels a grading scale A, B, C, D, F.

21. Just glad grades are no longer a part of student teaching.

22. The pass/no credit system encourages student teachers to do further self-evaluation.

Cooperating Teacher Questionnaire Summary

Although the percentages recorded are not overwhelming in terms of providing support for continuation of the pass/no credit system, 71% is a sufficient majority to assume most cooperating teachers feel the use of the pass/no credit system is worthwhile. The data further revealed that the majority of those surveyed felt that the pass/no credit system made evaluation easier for cooperating teachers. A large majority (83%) indicated that the final evaluation form used for the purpose of evaluating UNI student teachers was consistent with the use of the pass/no credit system.

The comments recorded were included to represent the feedback received from cooperating teachers. The majority of the comments represent support for the pass/no credit system with the exception of the comments related to question #1 which were solicited for the purpose of receiving negative comments about the pass/no credit system. No attempt was made to categorize the comments but rather to include those comments that were representative of the remarks received.

The overall feedback from cooperating teachers in present UNI student teaching centers is illustrative of majority support for the continuation of the pass/no credit system of evaluating UNI student teachers.

Administrative Questionnaire Responses

The results included under the title administrative questionnaire responses are based upon the data received from the questionnaires given to selected University of Northern Iowa student teaching center administrators. The administrators survey included elementary principals, Jr. High assistant principals, Jr. High principals, Sr. High assistant principals, Sr. High principals, Directors of Elementary Education, Directors of Secondary Education, Personnel Directors, Assistant Superintendents and Superintendents.

The survey breakdown below showed how responses were received, according to administrative positions. The following responses were recorded:

> 7 elementary principals, 3 Jr. High principals, 0 Jr. High assistant principals, 4 Sr. High principals, 1 Sr. High assistant principal, 3 Directors of Elementary Education, 1 Director of Secondary Education, 4 Personnel Directors, 4 Assistant Superintendents, 7 Superintendents, and those who listed their position only as building principals numbered 24.

The administrators involved in this phase of the survey included those from the large as well as the small school system presently cooperating in the University of Northern Iowa student teaching programs.

The results show the responses in terms of the overall support for the pass/no credit system, and selected representative comments are included to show the general reaction of our center administrators to our pass/no credit system.

The following is the list of centers that participated in this survey of reaction to the pass/no credit system:

Cedar Falls	Council Bluffs	Mason City
Cedar Rapids	Fort Dodge	Waterloo
Charles City	Lakes	
Clinton	Marshalltown	

The questions are presented and data recorded according to the way it was presented on the survey instrument.

Administrative Questionnaire Responses

Question #1. Would you like to see UNI continue the use of the pass/no credit system?

Yes	No Opinion	No
50 (83%)	4 (7%)	6 (10%)

Reasons given for a No response: (Selected responses)

1. I need more specific information about a candidate's student teaching experience than the pass/no credit seems to provide.
2. One of the first things we look for is the kind of grade a person received in student teaching.
3. A grade is always a good indicator. With the vast number of young teachers currently applying, an administrator needs a quick reference to spot check--grades in student teaching would meet this need.
4. Pass/no credit is a "cop out". People are always judged by someone else, subjectively. Students should have the experience in their teaching.
5. No, I would not like to see it continued. I feel a good or outstanding potential teacher should receive more recognition than just a "pass" credit.

Question #2. Has the pass/no credit system forced you to consult other references besides the student teaching grade when considering a candidate for employment?

Yes	No Opinion	No
12 (20%)	3 (5%)	45 (75%)

Selected comments related to question 2:

1. Yes, frequently it has. I used other references also, even with the graded system.
2. Yes, this is good.
3. No, I have never used the letter grades as a criteria.
4. No, have always reviewed narrative evaluation both from teachers of UNI and supervising teachers. Grades not that important.
5. No, just more work in initial screening.
6. No more than in the past. A letter grade or the pass/fail system is only as good as the accompanying information substantiating it.

7. No more than has ever been the case.

8. I have always depended more on the written evaluation of the supervising teacher than the grades.

9. I have always used the written evaluation in preference to grades.

Question #3. What do you consider the major strengths of the pass/no credit system?

Selected comments:

1. Easier for the supervising teacher.

2. I feel that it doesn't stamp a prospect as a "B" teacher or a "C" teacher. I feel it gives a more complete picture of the candidate's capabilities.

3. Reduces some pressure on the student. Forces a more complete evaluation.

4. Student teachers appear to work under less strain. They concentrate more on doing a good job for the sake of doing rather than obtaining a high letter grade.

5. Not influenced by a grade now.

6. More emphasis put on the comment part of the evaluation.

7. Takes pressure off the supervising teacher in trying to decide between a C, B, etc.

8. Supervising teachers feel freer to discuss the student teacher's work.

9. A good letter grade was deceiving, it depended upon the personality of the evaluators.

10. Helps student teacher to be more creative without worrying about being graded for it.

11. Forces the evaluator to be more objective as he writes his comments.

12. Keeps the University from using grades as a club over students.

13. Removes the pressure and artificial stimulation for work and allows the student to accept criticism more in the way it is intended.

Question #4. What do you consider the major weaknesses of the pass/no credit system?

Selected comments:

1. I don't feel there is a major weakness in the pass/no credit system.

2. Allows little, if any, flexability in evaluation.

3. The major weakness in the pass/no credit system is the blanket effect given to all student teachers. I'm still of the opinion that outstanding, good, or poor teachers should be classified in some manner.

4. Some students become too lax.

5. The system may lack the "punch" many student teachers may need.

6. The best students are not rewarded by "A".

7. Unless good comments are made, there is little chance to distinguish from the very good to the mediocre.

8. I need more "specific" information about a candidate's student teaching experience than the pass/no credit system seems to provide.

9. I feel that possibly this system requires a more conscientious approach than some supervising teachers are willing to provide.

10. In screening more time is required for selection.

Question #5. Additional reactions toward pass/no credit system:

1. I definitely hope that the pass/no credit system is here to stay.

2. I hope the university will continue to monitor its use.

3. Additional time needed for true evaluation of the system.

4. Reports by supervisors are of great importance. Supervisors must continue to do a good job.

5. In general, I do not like pass/no credit, but in the case of student teaching I can see no big problems.

6. The grade recognizes mostly the cognitive aspects of a teacher. Where as, the affective learning can be better evaluated by pass/no credit with comments.

7. I feel the pass/no credit is an accurate as any method.

8. Many teachers have hidden behind the letter grade, the curve and the high grading syndrome for many years. It was always a way out. Now they must explain their actions.

9. I view the move as a step toward security on the part of the employer as far as hiring a candidate. Confidence could be restored if potential employers know the signature on a recommendation represented the best professional judgement of the writer.

10. I like the fact that one is now directed to the actual evaluation of performance--not some sort of grade summary.

11. At least allow students to elect either pass/no credit or to be given a letter grade.

12. Pass/no credit does not put a premium on superior effort.

13. Present evaluation form is ambiguous in that several areas are under each category so the form is difficult to use.

Administrative Questionnaire Summary

The administrative report presented results that showed the cross section of administrators represented in the UNI student teaching centers give majority support (83%) to the continuation of the pass/no credit system for student teaching evaluation at the University of Northern Iowa. In the survey of UNI center administrators only 10% opposed the continuation of the pass/no credit approach. 7% had no opinion on the same topic.

Even with the high incidents of support for the use of a pass/no credit evaluation only 20% responded that such a system forced them to consult other references besides the student teaching grade. 5% had no opinion and 75% reported that the system did not force them to do any additional consulting of reference. It should, however, be noted that many of the accompanying comments pointed out that previous to the initiation of the pass/no credit system additional references were consulted without prompting. Therefore, it cannot be said that the pass/no credit form of evaluation failed to force employers to consult other references but rather may have helped to reinforce an already used practice.

The comments recorded were included to illustrate the kinds of feedback received from administrators concerning the pass/no credit evaluation system. The comments listed were representative of the many received, but no attempt was made to categorize the feedback from the student teaching center administrators. As presented the overall feedback from administrators was highly positive toward providing support for the pass/no credit evaluation system.

COMPOSITE SUMMARY OF ALL DATA RECEIVED

The results of the complete survey are highly conclusive in terms of providing majority support for the pass/no credit system of evaluating student teachers. (See Appendix VII) The overall concern of the study was to answer the question of whether the pass/no credit system should be continued. Based on the total results it appears that the pass/no credit approach should be continued.

The results are so conclusive that no segment of those involved in this study recorded anything but majority support for continuation. This conclusion is most impressive when it is considered in light of the fact that the study included all personnel involved in the student teaching program. Majority support was given by student teachers, cooperating teachers, school administrators and hiring officials, and University representatives.

Additional support was provided for the continuation of the present evaluation procedure including the use of the present evaluation form. Majority support was also received from all segments surveyed.

A further look at the results reveals that even those who do not come in direct contact with the UNI student teaching program felt that the use of the pass/no credit evaluation procedure has much merit. The comments of those outside the present UNI student teaching centers were very similar to those made by administrators and cooperating teachers in our present center locations. This would seemingly indicate that regardless of ones contact with or use of such an approach to evaluation, most professionals involved in the education of teachers feel that this system has more than enough merit to warrant its continued use.

Based upon the data assembled it is the recommendation of this committee that the University of Northern Iowa Department of Teaching continue the use of the pass/no credit evaluation procedure. It is also further recommended that the presently used evaluation form 5A (revised) be retained as the instrument for use in the recording of the final evaluation of UNI student teachers.

Appendix I

University of Northern Iowa

Office of Student Field Experience

Dear Educator:

In an effort to keep our student teaching program continually meeting the needs of our students and the public schools, we are once more seeking your opinions.

As you are probably aware, the University of Northern Iowa moved from a letter grade for student teaching to a pass/no credit system on a trial basis some three years ago. We are now interested in receiving the reactions of those who have worked with the pass/no credit system to see if it really merits our continued use.

Enclosed you will find a brief questionnaire developed to gather feedback from public school administrators, cooperating teachers, student teachers and university representatives on the use of the pass/no credit system. We would very much appreciate your honest responses to the questions posed. Your opinions are highly regarded so any additional comments you wish to make will be greatly accepted.

Please return the questionnaire to the Office of Student Field Experience, Price Laboratory School, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Pass/No Credit Survey Committee
University of Northern Iowa

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL

POSITION_____

1. Would you like to see UNI continue the use of the pass/no credit grading system in student teaching? Why?

2. What do you consider the major strengths of the pass/no credit evaluation system in student teaching?

3. What do you consider the major weaknesses of the pass/no credit evaluation system in student teaching?

4. What recommendations would you suggest for improving the evaluation system?

5. Additional reactions toward pass/no credit system?

Appendix II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NON CENTER HIRING OFFICIALS

POSITION_____

1. Would you like UNI to continue the use of its pass/no credit grading system in student teaching? Why?

2. Does the pass/no credit system (coupled with the checklist and written recommendations) provide you with the kind of information you need in the screening process of potential teaching candidates?

3. Does absence of letter grades in our present pass/no credit evaluation system affect the employment opportunities of our teacher candidates?

4. What are the major strengths of the pass/no credit system in student teaching?

5. What are the major weaknesses of the pass/no credit system in student teaching?

6. Additional reactions toward pass/no credit system in student teaching?

Appendix III

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENT TEACHERS

1. Would you like UNI to continue the use of pass/no credit grading system in student teaching? Why?

2. What effect did the pass/no credit grading system have on you during student teaching?

3. What recommendations would you suggest for improving the evaluation system?

4. Additional reactions toward pass/no credit system in student teaching?

5. FOR GRADUATES ONLY:
   Did the absence of letter grades in our present evaluation system in student teaching effect your employment opportunities in any way? How?

Appendix IV

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COOPERATING TEACHERS

Teaching Level: Elem. Jr. Hi. Sr. Hi.

1. Would you like to see UNI continue the use of the pass/no credit system?

2. Has the pass/no credit system made evaluation easier or harder when working with UNI student teachers? In what ways?

3. Is the evaluation checklist found on the UNI final evaluation form consistent with a pass/no credit system?

4. Additional reactions toward pass/no credit system:

Appendix V

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Your position_____

1. Would you like to see UNI continue the use of the pass/no credit system? If not, why?

2. Has the pass/no credit system forced you to consult other references besides the student teaching grade when considering a candidate for employment?

3. What do you consider the major strengths of the pass/no credit system?

4. What do you consider the major weaknesses of the pass/no credit system?

5. Additional reactions toward pass/no credit system:

Appendix VI

COMPOSITE SUMMARY OF QUESTION #1

Each of the groups responded to the question: Would you like to see UNI continue the use of the pass/no credit grading system in student teaching?

The following table represents the various group responses:

	Yes	No	Not Necessarily	No Preference	No Opinion	Unfamiliar
Coordinators	12	3	2			
University Personnel	9	0		1		
Non Center Hiring Officials	10	5		1	3	2
Student Teachers	31	1		1		
Center Cooperating Teachers	63	18			8	
Center Administrators	50	6			4	
Total	175	33	2	3	15	2

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JUL 1 7 1973

July 16, 1973

Mr. Raymond Kuehl, Coordinator
Student Field Experience
Department of Teaching
Malcolm Price Laboratory School
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613

Dear Mr. Kuehl:

The report on your Pass/No Credit Survey was sidelined due to my absence from the office when it arrived and for sometime after that due to a number of priorities which needed attention.

I am sending the report to Joel Burdin, Director of ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education. Dr. Burdin is also the editor of the Journal of Teacher Education. I am certain that he will give this thorough consideration for possible use in the Journal and will likely be in contact with you. (Wont you, Joel?)

Sincerely yours,

Mel

Melvin C. Buller
Executive Secretary

cc: Joel L. Burdin, Editor
Journal of Teacher Education

Jeffc

① Log in etc. for Journal, attach green form

② ask J. Luke to eval for ERIC

③ ask me to dictate letter to Kuehl w/copy to Buller